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Obamacare to blame as job opportunities slip in Michigan

Posted By [Caroline May](#) On 1:19 PM 01/17/2014 In | [No Comments](#)

Were it not for Obamacare, there would be at least 1,000 more workers in West Michigan, according to a new report.

The [report](#), released Thursday by researchers at Grand Valley State University, found that companies are opting out of hiring and cutting hours due to President Obama's signature health-care law.

"Firms are choosing not to hire more workers in reaction to the Affordable Care Act," said Grand Valley economics professor Leslie Muller, who conducted the research with colleague Paul Isely, in a statement.

"Conservatively, there would be 1,000 more workers today in Kent, Ottawa, Muskegon and Allegan counties if not for the [Affordable Care Act]," she continued. "This is not even taking into effect the decrease in hours firms are making to keep employees at part-time."

The Grand Valley researchers found that 29 percent of firms said they have limited employees' hours so that they will not be considered full-time workers under Obamacare, 15 percent have increased their use of temporary workers, and 22 percent said they plan to reduce or limit hiring.

According to the survey, 49 percent of firms have passed additional health-care costs on to their workers and 40 percent are considering passing along those costs as an option.

"The predominant way firms in Western Michigan are containing health costs is by offering more high deductible plans, changing their prescription coverage," Muller [told](#) the region's local News 8 in a television interview. The report reveals that 37 percent shifted to the high deductible option and 30 percent changed their prescription drug coverage.

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